

November/December 2019



# Temple Talk

News you can use from the TI-JCC community

## FROM THE RABBI'S STUDY

### *A Once-In-A-Lifetime Interfaith Dialogue Experience in Germany With Rabbi Fine, May 8-17*

In 2010, I was privileged to get to know the producer and main actors of the famous Oberammergau Passion Play. The small Bavarian town has been performing the story around the death and resurrection of Jesus since 1634. It is performed every ten years at the start of each decade.

The Oberammergau Passion Play is not only the most famous of the European passion plays, but was also particularly notorious for its anti-Semitic tropes in earlier times. The last couple of renditions have made extraordinary progress in redressing those wrongs and celebrating instead the Jewishness of Jesus. Jesus now on stage in a tallit, reading from a sefer Torah. The producer, a native of Oberammergau named Christian Stückl, whom I am proud to call my friend, takes the principal actors to Israel in preparation for the production, and makes a point of bringing them to Yad Vashem, Israel's Holocaust memorial museum, as well as visiting the key Christian sites in Jerusalem that are relevant for the play.

This is a production with hundreds of villagers on the stage (along with some camels and donkeys), and Stückl teaches his villagers to sing the Shema in Hebrew. "When the old villagers today were children," they sang before Hitler," he told me nine years ago. "Now I teach them Hebrew." In appreciation for Stückl's work in transforming the Passion Play, the Abraham Geiger College (the rabbinical school in Berlin where I teach adjunct and where our rabbinic interns come from) will be conferring upon him its Abraham Geiger Medal in Oberammergau.

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## A MESSAGE FROM RABBI LEIAH MOSER

This year's fall season of Adult Ed has me thinking about the relationship between history and memory. As Jews, we tend to think of ourselves as a people with an especially close relationship to its history. So much of our religious tradition is predicated on ritual acts of memory tied to our people's sacred history—the exodus from Egypt, the wanderings in the wilderness, the destruction of the temples, and so on. By ritually engaging with our collective memory of these significant moments, we affirm our connection to our past and to the meaning the past holds for us.

But when we begin to look at the past—not through the lens of sacred memory but from the more analytical perspective of history—tensions tend to arise. The historian is less concerned with the meaning of the stories we tell ourselves about the past than with determining with as much certainty as possible what actually took place. Where the story happens to coincide with what the historical evidence has to teach us is well and good, but when the two come into conflict we are faced with the awkward problem of what to do about it. Do we reject our religious tradition completely in light of historical facts which call into question its foundational stories? Or do we reject the historical facts themselves in favor of a fundamentalist attitude which holds our sacred texts to be true in all cases regardless of the available evidence?

For those who regard either of these paths as unacceptable (i.e., the vast majority of liberal Jews), it becomes necessary to adopt a more nuanced attitude toward the relationship between Truth and Meaning.

*Continued on p. 13*

## President's column



It was so nice seeing most of our members during the High Holidays, including Sukkot, Hoshana Rabbah, Shemini Atzeret, and Simchat Torah. Whether celebrating with our families over a festive meal or catching up with our fellow congregants, taking time out to reflect on our lives is always a refreshing period for all of us, I'm sure.

For me, the High Holidays provide a chance to reflect on my ethical life, my family life, and my professional life.

As president of Temple Israel, I have another dimension to reflect on. When I looked at the congregation from the bima it took on a new perspective. I saw so many familiar faces: many who have grown up and now have facial hair, and parents now with young children standing at their sides. I saw metaphorically the empty seats of former members who are no longer with us. I feel a deep responsibility to you all to manage the business, religious, and social priorities of our Jewish community. There have been 42 presidents before me who have managed us through prior challenging times, and now it is my turn.

Just a few weeks ago we commemorated the tragedy at the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh, which occurred just a year ago. This tragedy has been felt worldwide in every Jewish community. We all have our personal reasons for joining a shul. In a perfect world, we'd all attend Shabbat and other holiday services, but we all practice in different ways. Some of us may join as a way to honor our family tradition and some as an obligation to all those Jews lost in the Shoah.

Hopefully for all of us, whether we come to services once a year or more often, our shul brings an atmosphere of peace, camaraderie, unity, or connection in some way. However, some part of our welcoming has been compromised with preventative security measures as a result of the tragedy at Tree of Life. Let's make sure we don't become complacent and that we all stand up to rising anti-Semitism.

### TI-JCC Mission Statement

TIJCC offers a choice of Conservative and Reconstructionist services, and a variety of cultural, social and educational programs for those who are committed to creating an evolving and vibrant Jewish community in northern New Jersey.

We are now in the month of Cheshvan, with no holidays or special mitzvot. This is quite a change from last month of Tishrei which began with Rosh Hashanah. We can, however, resume our usual hectic schedule:

On **November 9**, we will honor our military veterans on Shabbat morning. If you or a family member is a veteran, please join us that day. **November 16** will be Julia Jacobs's bat mitzvah, and **November 23** will be the Matt Antebi's Havdalah bar mitzvah. On Tuesday, **November 26** is the Ridgewood area's Interfaith Thanksgiving Service at 7:30 pm at the Old Paramus Reformed Church in Ridgewood. And on Sunday, **December 8**, Josh Holden will be honored as our BMC Man of the Year by the Northern New Jersey Region of the Federation of Jewish Men's Clubs; Max Rothschild will be honored as the Youth of the Year. Details will be following shortly. As you can see, we have many simchas of our own to celebrate!

I am very proud to announce that Robert and Rita Obeiter, and Maureen Nassan will be this year's honorees at our annual Ways & Means Dinner to be held on Saturday, March 7. Bob, our immediate past president of three years, has long been the pillar of our community. There is no task, repair, shiva minyan, gabbai-ing, or any other activity he has not either led or participated in for the past 20 years. Bob and Rita have dedicated themselves to Temple Israel in every imaginable way for so long.

Maureen has been our office manager for over 15 years, and I can say with confidence that she does a yeoman's job for us in keeping in order all of our records, events, mailings, accounts, caterers, tenants, and everything else none of us could ever imagine goes on behind the scenes. If not for Maureen's dedication 24/7, we would not be as organized and well run as we are. She is a tremendous help to Rabbis Fine and Moser, Jessica our education director, and to any of us who require her involvement from an operational perspective. David Volin has graciously agreed to chair this year's Ways & Means Dinner and he promises this to be a fun and successful event. Mark the date on your calendar now for March 7 to join us as we honor Robert, Rita, and Maureen!

I started off by talking about the holidays and seeing everyone in shul during the High Holidays. I'd like to encourage you to also attend our upcoming b'nai mitzvot or Friday night and Saturday Shabbat services. You can also try out RCBI's service upstairs with Rabbi Moser to see if that appeals to you, or if you are a member of RCBI, please don't hesitate to join us downstairs. That is the beauty of our shul . . . we do have choices. And, if you see me around, please feel free to tell me what you like here and what we can improve on!

*B' shalom*  
*Howard Schreiber, president*

## MUSICAL NOTES



### SAVE THE DATES

#### Open Mic

Sunday afternoon, November 24, 2019, 3:00-5:00 pm.

For all ages: sing a song; play an instrument; tell a joke, story, or poem; munchies and soft drinks. Contact Marc Cantor for more information: [marccan999@gmail.com](mailto:marccan999@gmail.com).

#### Ridgewoodstock

Saturday evening, February 8, 2020, 8:00-10:30 pm.

Peace, love and rugelach: Sub-Bourbonites Band, dancing, song and trivia contests, 1960s costumes. RSVP by Feb. 4 to [music@synagogue.org](mailto:music@synagogue.org); \$25 in advance, \$30 at the door. *Let us know if you attended Woodstock in 1969!*

[TamaraFreeman@verizon.net](mailto:TamaraFreeman@verizon.net), [debbiecantor@optonline.net](mailto:debbiecantor@optonline.net).

#### American Israel Cultural Foundation Concert

Sunday afternoon, May 3, 2020, 3:00 pm; generously sponsored by Rich Schnaittacher.

### COUNTING MANY MUSICAL HIGH HOLIDAY BLESSINGS

*Tamara Freeman*

Thank you, dear friends, for sharing so many compliments on this year's High Holiday music. This article acknowledges the great efforts and dedication—of so many talented people—who enriched our High Holiday worship with beautiful music.

Our musical preparations began last summer with weekly choir and Temple Israel's bimah band rehearsals. Our weekly practice sessions grew in joy as we mastered the text and music. Rabbi Fine's beautiful baritone voice inspired us to sing with kavanah and confidence. The Musaf ensemble rehearsed many additional hours; many congregants were especially moved by the ensemble's interpretation of Un'Tan'tokef. Special thanks to Harlan Rosenthal, who recorded rehearsals and shared these recordings through computer links; his technological acumen enabled our singers to practice prayers at home.

The musicians led machzor prayers through their lyrical voices and instruments. We ushered in 5780 with an exquisite Selichot service, shared with the choir of Glen Rock Jewish Center and the GRJC cantorial soloist, Rabbi Shaul Praver. Our combined choirs filled the sanctuary with beloved High Holiday motifs.

Erev Rosh Hashanah began with a prelude played by Irene Bressler, harp, and Artie Bressler, clarinet and flute. The choir and bimah band led us in soulful worship. The Musaf ensemble exquisitely sang prayers during the daytime Rosh Hashanah services on both days; Un'tan'tokef was truly a highlight. The Torah hakafot were filled with ruach thanks to choir members who spontaneously ascended the bimah and sang joyful songs. We affectionately call these singers the hakafot flash mob. Yasher koach to Oren Rosenthal, the talented son of Nanette Rosenbaum and Harlan Rosenthal, who jumped right in. We also thank terrific tenor Todd Bakal, who shared his beautiful voice in the flash mob.

Kol Nidrei began with my viola rendition of composer Louis Lewandowski's setting of the haunting Kol Nidrei prayer. The viola—made by Joseph Bausch in 1935—was rescued from Berlin, Germany during the Shoah. Debbie Cantor, Bill Scher, and Rabbi Fine recited the traditional Kol Nidrei with beautiful voices after many hours of rehearsing. Yom Kippur services were enhanced, again, by the Musaf ensemble, the Torah hakafot flash mob, and archival Holocaust songs sung by Tamara Freeman, Bill Scher, and Bob Dworkin. The bimah band treated us to Havdalah music at the very end of the Ne'ilah service. The bimah band also helped make our Sukkot and Simchat Torah services very joyful! *(See photos of our musicians and choir, taken by Rob Kern, on page 9).*

I want to acknowledge the generous help of Tina Polen, Jose Serna, and Maureen Nassan. They worked tirelessly to make the rehearsals and services run smoothly and look effortless. Tina is also our trusted sound check maven; when Tina says it sounds good, it must be true!

**5781 is less than a year away!** If you are thinking about being part of the joyful and vibrant Temple Israel music chaverah, please contact me at home at (201) 825-2094 or [TamaraFreeman@verizon.net](mailto:TamaraFreeman@verizon.net). I would love to hear from you!

**Tamara Freeman, DMA, Sacred Music Chair; Debbie Cantor, Concert Chair**

## RITUAL ROUNDUP

Baseball is over, football is midseason, and we're dealing with leaf removal. We made it through the High Holiday season and proudly recognize the major ritual contributors:

**Daveners:** Nanette Rosenbaum, Ilyse Goldman

**Torah readers:** Chris Dobkins, Elaine Silverstein, Abe Davis, Elyse Levine

**Haftarah readers:** Stephanie Gottesman, Tamara Freeman, Bob Obeiter, David Millman

**Shofar blowers:** Ariel Fine, Dan Schuler

**Gabbaim:** Bob Obeiter, Bob Smolen, Chris Dobkins

**Kol Nidre soloists:** Debbie Cantor, Bill Scher

**Choir leadership:** Tamara Freeman

**Children's programming organizer:** Brian Della Torre

**Ushers:** Scott Baslaw, Jay Berger, Eli Bordowitz, Ira Brandenburg, Howard Engle, Eric Klein, Robert Kern, Steven Kornblit, Joe Landau, Mark Lipkowitz, David Millman, Alex Rothschild, Tova Samuels, Bruce Thaler, Dennis Vogel

**Bimah management:** Bob Obeiter

**Simchat Torah honorees (Hattan Torah, Hattan Bereshit):** Joe Landau, James Goldfarb

**A whole bunch of stuff:** Rabbi Fine

**Logistics superstars:** Jose and Tina

**YASHER KOACH** to all of you!

In the Torah we've started over with the book of Genesis, and the portions at this time of year are the wonderful stories of our patriarchs/matriarchs and their interesting family adventures. Join us on Shabbat to hear, read, and discuss them.

After we cruise through November (Cheshvan/Kislev), the month of December (Kislev/Tevet) has two key events:

**Seventh Annual Anti-Gun Violence Shabbat on December 14.**

**Hanukkah:** We light the first candle on Sunday night, December 22 (latkes, yum!)

On an ongoing basis, please feel free to sign up to do a Torah or Haftarah reading. Signup is accessible online at <http://signup.com/go/desLL4>. (Contact David Millman with any questions: [millman.david@gmail.com](mailto:millman.david@gmail.com)).

On a weekly basis, come join us at 9:00 am on Shabbat mornings to engage with Rabbi Fine during Muffins and Mishnah at the beginning of the service; and at 9:30 am on Sunday mornings for that minyan.

*Dave Millman and David Weiss, cochairs*

### Etz Hayim Chumash

The *Etz Hayim* chumash (the Five Books of Moses plus all haftarot) makes a very special gift. The volume also contains insightful commentaries, essays, and maps to enrich the Torah service and study sessions. Contact Maureen Nassan in the temple office for information.



## YOUTH HAPPENINGS

TI youth programming picked up where it left off, with engaging icebreaker programs in September and a celebratory USY event in TI's own sukkah in October. Approximately 15 USYers, including five of TI's own, enjoyed socializing, eating pizza, and making dessert sushi in the sukkah. Special thanks to Tamara Amos, who graciously agreed to chaperone. And congratulations to Laurence Fine, who was elected president of our local USY chapter.

TI Youth programming aims to encourage our middle and high school members to engage with their Jewish peers at TI, in Bergen County, and beyond through age-appropriate social, religious, and cultural events. We are affiliated with the Conservative movement's Kadima organization for middle school students and the United Synagogue Youth organization for high school students. Our local chapter, affectionately known as FLIPPER, includes Conservative congregations in Fair Lawn, Paramus, and Ridgewood. Our director, Marcia Kagedan, and I welcome your comments and suggestions for how we can improve programming and engagement. I can be reached at [jameskasen@verizon.net](mailto:jameskasen@verizon.net).

**James Goldfarb, chair**

### Upcoming Youth Event:

#### **FLIPPER USY MOVIE NIGHT**

Nov. 23<sup>rd</sup>, 7 to 9 pm at JCCP/CBT; 304 East Midland Avenue, Paramus

Free for members, \$5 non-members.

RSVP and questions: Marcia (USY Advisor) [edudirector@jccparamus.org](mailto:edudirector@jccparamus.org)



The Brandeis Men's Club has been busy. Often behind the scenes but ever present, the BMC:

- bought ice cream for all NNJA and BCHSJS students
- mulched the synagogue garden beds before the holidays
- cleaned up the TI cemetery plot
- built the sukkah
- ran our Steak & Scotch event

Our major fundraiser will take place on January 25. The Night at the Opera will feature two professional opera singers and an accompanist. Look for details soon. Please support this event. Helping us is helping you.

**B'shalom, Scott Baslaw, president**



## ADULT EDUCATION

Adult Education for the coming year has a terrific calendar. Our goal is to offer opportunities for our congregation to learn, celebrate, and enjoy our rich Jewish heritage. Please feel free to contact me or Rabbi Fine if you have ideas to make this year's program more meaningful.

### ***New Course***

Coming soon! *The How and Why of Basic Judaism* will be offered by Rabbi Fine on Tuesday nights. The curriculum will be decided by the participants. Please contact me at [Rsmolen18@gmail.com](mailto:Rsmolen18@gmail.com) to create a curriculum to meet your needs and answer your questions to give you the tools to celebrate Judaism.

### ***Lecture Series***

Rabbi Fine and Rabbi Moser are offering Sunday lectures starting at 10:30 am. You can never expect to know where you are without first understanding where you have been. This is perhaps especially the case when it comes to Judaism, a tradition which has been profoundly shaped by the collective experiences of the Jewish people over the last 3,000 years. Join us this fall for a series of talks exploring Jewish history from its earliest beginnings to the present day:

- 11/3/19 The First Exile and Second Temple Period
- 11/10/19 First Century Sectarianism and the Destruction of the Second Temple
- 11/17/19 The Beginnings of Rabbinic Judaism (The Mishnah and Talmuds)
- 11/24/19 Medieval Jews in the Muslim World
- 12/8/19 Medieval Jews in the Christian World
- 12/15/19 Early Modern Jews and the End of the Rishonim
- 1/5/19 Sabbatai Tzvi, the Failed Messiah and Harbinger of the Modern World
- 1/19/20 Hasidism, Enlightenment, and Emancipation
- 2/2/20 Modern Jews, the Holocaust, and the State of Israel (The Third Commonwealth)

### ***Discussions***

The *Story of David* reading group with Rabbi Moser meets the first and third Wednesday of every month at 7:30 pm continuing on November 6.

Weekly on Thursdays at 2:00 pm, Rabbi Moser explores Mystical Parashat HaShavua as seen through the lens of some of the classics of Jewish mysticism. Each week, Rabbi Moser will read a part of the parasha alongside commentary from the Zohar or the Chassidic masters and discuss the insights contained therein.

Muffins and Mishna will be continue on Shabbat morning and at Sunday minyan with Rabbi Fine.

### ***Travel***

This year, Rabbi Fine will be leading a group to Germany in May (May 8-15, 2020) to include a weekend in Berlin, followed by participation in a Jewish interaction with the production of the famous *Oberammergau Passion Play*. Whether or not one is attending the trip, all are invited to join in the rabbi's Sunday lecture series, which will cover the history of German-Jewish relations in Germany and how Christians and Germans have responded to the legacy of the Holocaust.

Dr. Ira Spar's trip to Morocco will take place in January.

### ***Israel Film Festival***

Save November 11 & November 21 at 7:30 pm for the Israel Film Festival, promoted by the Jewish Federation. Two movies, *Shoelaces* and *Fractures*, will be screened at the Warner Theater in Ridgewood. *Shoelaces* (Nov. 11) traces the complicated relationship between an aging father and his special-needs son. *Fractures* (Nov. 21) deals with a renowned professor when charges of sexual coercion are leveled. More info at <https://www.jfnj.org/filmfestival>.

### ***More***

Temple Israel will host the NJ Board of Rabbi's Sweet Taste of Torah study program on February 1, 2020.

The Northern NJ Jewish Federation will offer an Ulpan Hebrew class beginning February 5, 2020.

We will have two scholar-in-residence programs: The Adele Rebell Memorial Scholar program and the Rabbi Salkowitz Distinguished Speaker program in conjunction with Avodat Shalom in River Edge.

We will participate in the Israel day parade on Sunday, June 7, 2020.

### ***Bob Smolen, chair***



## A Message from Jessica

In Pirkei Avot 1:6 we read, “Yehoshuah ben Perachia says: Make for yourself a Rabbi, acquire for yourself a friend, and judge every person as meritorious.” What does it mean to acquire a friend? Who is a friend after all?

Well, Rabbi Nassan says, “A person should acquire a friend for himself by eating and drinking with him(her), by studying Torah and debating with him(her), by lodging with him(her) and by sharing thoughts with him regarding Torah and life. And when they debate matters of Torah and importance, his friend will respond to him, and thus the bonds of friendship and truth will be strengthened.”

At the start of Hebrew school, these are really our true goals. We hope to teach Torah so that our students have knowledge and connections to the Jewish community, but we know that these connections will be deeper if there are friendships that bloom. Jewish life after all is centered around being part of a community, so much so that we need ten people for a minyan. Therefore, we’re doing many of the things that Rabbi Nassan suggests. We have a bagel break where kids have time to just be kids and create relationships; we have class trips scheduled so students have new experiences together; and each of our teachers works hard at giving students pieces of Torah to think about and discuss. Perhaps this is why when you walk through our halls on Sunday mornings or Wednesday afternoons you hear happy students enjoying each other’s company.

We’ve welcomed so many new students to our school this year! We are thrilled to have the Delgado, Greenberg, Levi, Mentzel, Pollak, Rubin, and Trigger families as part of the NNJJA community. It’s been so nice to get to know you and your kids. We are lucky to have you.

**Please join us on Sunday, December 15, for our NNJJA Hanukkah Party! We’re having a Hanukkah-themed game show and it’s going to be a blast.**

**Jessica Spiegel, director**  
JSpiegel@synagogue.org  
201-444-4194



## SISTERHOOD NEWS & EVENTS

Fall has been a flurry of activity, and Sisterhood has been just as busy.

First, a big thank you to all the shoppers, cooks, and helpers who prepared pans and pans of kugel and turned out platters of other delicious foods for the break fast at Yom Kippur. All hands were busy, and everyone got to make new friends and to know old friends better. And, of course, it was wonderful to see everyone enjoying those kugels and other treats as we ended the holiday as a community. Special thanks to Elaine Silverstein for coordinating this effort.

Sisterhood gathered once again for a celebration of Sukkot. Although the weather didn't cooperate, we still got to enjoy each other's company. The Israeli food was tasty and enjoyed by all. It was a wonderful evening.

Next up is our Progressive Dinner. It's always a fun night of socializing. Thank you to all our hosts, our participants, and everyone who works so diligently to make it a successful evening.

Sisterhood will be just as busy as we move toward winter. Please make sure you have the following dates on your calendar:

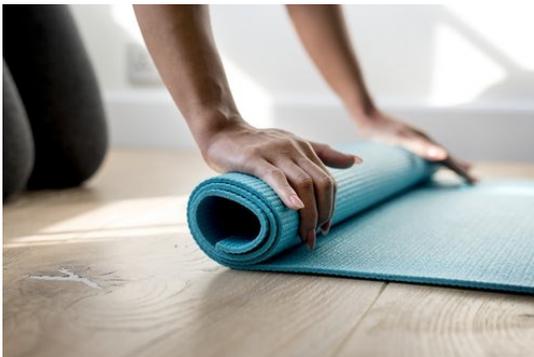
**Sunday, November 24, 7 pm:** The next Sisterhood Book Club meeting will that evening, we will discuss *Agatha Christie: An Autobiography*.

**Tuesday, December 10, 6 pm:** Hanukkah program for paid-up members at a member's home. Did you remember to pay your Sisterhood dues yet?

**Saturday, January 18: Sisterhood Shabbat.** If you would like to participate in the service, we have a place for you. Please contact Arlene for more information.



Watch your e-mail for more information about both of these big events.



And don't forget, **yoga is ongoing on Thursdays at the temple at 7 pm.** It's good for your health and mental well-being! Sign up for a series, or drop in for a single class. Newcomers are always welcome. Contact Debbie Cantor for more information: [debbiecantor@optonline.net](mailto:debbiecantor@optonline.net).

As we approach Hanukkah, remember that **our gift shop is available for all of your holiday and Judaica needs.** You'll find holiday gifts, decor, candles, dreidels, and menorahs. As always, hostess gifts, beautiful Shabbat candles, and wedding gifts are on hand. Contact Stephanie Gottesman for more information.

To RSVP for any meeting or for any questions, I can be reached at 201-236-2957 or [arleneb@yahoo.com](mailto:arleneb@yahoo.com).

**Arlene Bernhardt, Sisterhood president**

PS: Looking for something fun to do? Want to learn how to make fresh challah? Sign up for The Great Big Challah Bake.

**REGISTER TODAY!!**

Don't Miss the Raffle!

JEWISH Journeys

**THE GREAT BIG CHALLAH BAKE**

NORTHERN NEW JERSEY

**November 14, 2019 • 7:30pm**

Factory 220, 220 Passaic Avenue, Passaic, NJ

\$36 per person. Space is limited. Register early. No walk-ins

**To register, [bit.ly/jichallahbake2019](http://bit.ly/jichallahbake2019)**

For more information or to volunteer, please contact [jigreatbigchallahbake2019@gmail.com](mailto:jigreatbigchallahbake2019@gmail.com)

Sponsorship Opportunities Available

The Shabbos Project

FACTORY 220

JANSPiRE BERGEN

## B'YACHAD

Shana tova and chag sameach,

B'yachad has been busy celebrating the new year. We want to send out a great big thank you to Tara and Craig Maurizi for hosting our B'yachad potluck. We had fun eating in the beautiful sukkah, playing soccer, running around, and making s'mores.

Please join us at our next event. All are welcome! We will be having a football potluck on Sunday, November 17 at 4:00 pm. We are still looking for a host family. If you are interested, please reach out to me: [jennifer.shub@gmail.com](mailto:jennifer.shub@gmail.com).

As always, feel free to bring any friends who may be interested in our group. If you have any questions, let me know.

I'm looking forward to seeing you at the next potluck.

*Jen Leiman, B'Yachad chair*

*Music, cont'd. from p. 4*

Please join me in thanking our wonderful 5780 TI musicians pictured in Rob Kern's photographs:

**Choir:** Michaela Ambrosius, Debbie Cantor, Marc Cantor, Bob Dworkin, Elyse Beidner Levene, Ross Mattio, Jo Rosen, Harlan Rosenthal, Tova Samuels, Bill Scher, Barbara Schneider, Elaine Silverstein, Bob Smolen.

**Musaf Ensemble:** Debbie Cantor, Marc Cantor, Tamara Freeman, James Goldfarb, Harlan Rosenthal, Bill Scher, Elaine Silverstein

**Piano and Harp:** Irene Bressler

**Temple Israe'lights Bimah Band:**  
Marc Cantor and Susan Kornblit, guitar  
Artie Bressler, woodwinds  
Debbie Cantor and Anne Wolf, flute  
Tamara Freeman, violin  
Wayne Miller, percussion



## Tikkun Olam

The Tikkun Olam committee consists of members of both TI and RCBI who work together to try to repair the world. Our efforts focus on helping people in our community who are poor and homeless and on raising awareness about important national issues.

In the coming year, we will focus on our regular activities of feeding the homeless, collecting blood donations, and assisting neighbors such as the residents of Ridgecrest Senior Apartments, a low-income housing complex in Ridgewood. We are also planning future events, such as a Shabbat morning program in November focusing on disability issues, our seventh annual Anti-Gun-Violence Shabbat, and a spring event focusing on environmental issues.

### PAST EVENTS

#### Yom Kippur Food and Clothing Drive

Thanks to the generosity of members of Temple Israel and RCBI, we collected six carloads of food and 20 large bags of clothing to benefit needy families in our local community. Social Services of Ridgewood told us that before our donation, "The pantry was empty, and now it's full."

#### Sukkot Immigrant Panel—October 18

Sukkot is a time for welcoming guests, and on Friday night, October 18, the evening of the annual Shabbat dinner in the sukkah, Tikkun Olam hosted a panel discussion by congregants who were welcomed as immigrants to the United States. Many thanks to Julie Unger, Boris Lerner, and Raquel Nachajon for sharing their journeys with us. They were inspiring and a reminder how our diversity makes us stronger and richer as a congregation and nation.

### UPCOMING EVENTS

#### Focus on Autism – Saturday, November 23 Kiddush

Join us as we welcome Dr. Suzanne Buchanan, Executive Director of Autism NJ, for an after-kiddush talk about autism: basic information, incidence in New Jersey, and available resources for families.

#### Seventh Annual Anti-Gun-Violence Shabbat – Saturday, December 14 Kiddush

The TI-RCBI community is proud to be one of hundreds of congregations nationwide, of all faiths, that participate in this commemoration of the Sandy Hook shootings intended to raise awareness of the issue of gun violence. Our very special kiddush speaker this year will be State Senate Majority Leader Loretta Weinberg, who will focus on current and future state legislation.

#### Fall Blood Drive—Sunday, November 17, 8:45 am- 2:00 pm

The next blood drive will take place on Sunday, November 17. If you've been donating for years, thanks very much, and please continue. If you're never done it before, it's easy and painless, so give it a try. The need for blood is urgent and unceasing. You can drop in or make an appointment in advance. To sign up for future donations, contact Bob Rohrberger at [rohrberger@foxrothschild.com](mailto:rohrberger@foxrothschild.com) or Jerry Birenz at [JerzykB@aol.com](mailto:JerzykB@aol.com).

#### Family Promise Walk-In Dinners

Four times each year, our synagogue community cooks, delivers, and serves dinner at the Family Promise of Bergen County walk-in dinner program in Hackensack. Generally, we serve a hot and hearty meal to more than 100 people. This large-scale endeavor is possible through the leadership of Sue Hill and Nadine Genet and the continued efforts of a large group of volunteers who donate food and prepare and serve the meals. The remaining Fall 2019 cooking and serving dates are: cooking, Sun., Dec. 1; serving, Tues., Dec. 3.

Many congregants donate food items to this important effort. If you would like to help out with cooking or serving or to donate, contact Nadine Genet at [nzgenet@outlook.com](mailto:nzgenet@outlook.com).



#### Ridgecrest Senior Apartments

Starting with the NNJA Hanukkah party in 2017, the Tikkun Olam Committee has forged a very pleasant relationship with the staff and residents of the Ridgecrest Senior Center in Ridgewood. Many of the residents of this community are food-insecure and in need of opportunities for socialization. We regularly provide healthy snacks, and once or twice a year we prepare and serve dinner to the residents. If you would like to help us reach out to our neighbors at Ridgecrest, contact Elaine Silverstein at [elasil@optonline.net](mailto:elasil@optonline.net).

*Bob Rohrberger & Elaine, Silverstein, co-chairs*

## MEMBERSHIP

On behalf of the Membership Committee and our Temple Israel and Jewish Community Center community we would like to warmly welcome the following new members:

### Temple Israel

Emily & Matt Bandelt and their 2 children, Ridgewood

Suzana and Alan Caro, Teaneck

Javier Delgado & Anly Marin and their 2 children, Maywood

Evan Fleischmann & Annemarie Roscello, West Milford

Josh Green & Jaclyn Ngai and their 2 children, River Edge

Avidan & Leslie Hadad and their 2 children, Fair Lawn

Bonnie Kaplan, Allendale

Raj Khettry & Laura Rolfe, Ridgewood

Vladlein Kontorov & Zarina Nestor and their 2 children, Upper Saddle River

Deena & Doron Kramarczyk and their 2 children, Ridgewood

Yuna & Seth Lessner and their 2 children, Upper Saddle River

Stephanie & Arie Levi and their 2 children, Fort Lee

Allison & Chad Mentzel and their 2 children, Fair Lawn

Kara & Aaron Miller and their 2 children, Glen Rock

Craig Maurizi & Tara Modlin and 1 child at home, Ridgewood

Helen & Ilan Pollak and their 2 children, Fair Lawn

Randi Rubin and her 3 children, Fair Lawn

Marjorie & Lyle Schwartz, Saddle River

Stacey Scott, Fair Lawn

Dale Trigger & Marissa Sweig and their 2 children, Ridgewood

### RCBI

Roann and Jay Rubin and their two children, Glen Rock

Our new members include families and individuals with and without kids, from a number of local towns.

Our vibrant, diverse community has been enhanced by these new members. All are encouraged to attend services, classes, programming, and celebrations throughout the year. We hope our new members will get involved; there are committees that would welcome your energy and ideas. Please feel free to talk with me, my co-chairs, or our temple board members about how to get involved. I can be reached at 201-805-3989.

A huge thank you to Jennifer Blank Weitz who served as my co-chair last year.

*Jo Rosen, co-chair*

*Jay Hynes, and Elissa Hynes, co-chairs*

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### Chesed: Here When you Need Us

The Chesed Committee maintains a collection of gently used medical equipment available for loan by congregants. We currently have canes, crutches, walkers, and a wheelchair. We hope you won't need any of these, but remember us if you do. If you have **gently used medical equipment (small items only)** that you'd like to donate, or if you have need of these items, **call Elyse Levene to make arrangements at 201-306-1283.**

### Hazak — A Social Group for Older Members

There's no "aging out" at TI-JCC! Active seniors may participate in **Hazak**; this is a social group that generally meets on the second Wednesday of every month for lunch and programs of interest that participants plan together. Dues are only \$15 per person; come join us! Contact the office.

### Have You Attended our Recon Salon Yet?

**Join Rabbi Leah for a Recon Salon, our free monthly, informal gatherings.** If you, your friends, or family have been wondering "What's Reconstructionist Judaism all about?" this is a great opportunity to get information about the movement, about RCBI's history, and chat it up with some RCBI members. We usually meet at **Land & Sea Diner, 20-12 Fair Lawn Avenue in Fair Lawn on Tuesday, November 19 and December 17 at 7:00 p.m. Note location may change so check emails and calendar. RSVP to [rcbi@synagogue.org](mailto:rcbi@synagogue.org) if you plan to attend. Coffee & snacks are on us!**

## Solidarity Shabbat, Saturday evening, October 25

TL-JCC hosted a Havdalah service and Solidarity Shabbat program to commemorate the anniversary of the shooting at Tree of Life synagogue in Pittsburgh. The event was sponsored by the American Jewish Committee (AJC) with Rep. Josh Gottheimer as the featured speaker. Mayor Ramon Hache and First Lady Tina attended, as did Rabbi David Levy of AJC. More photos are on page 14.

Fios1 covered the event; video footage is at [https://youtu.be/OOk8-mE8\\_WI](https://youtu.be/OOk8-mE8_WI). Thank you to Jo Rosen of Jo Rosen Photography for capturing these images.



*The Fines and Haches (left); Rep. Gottheimer addressing attendees.*



*(Far left): Eric Weiss and David Millman.  
(Left): Rabbis Fine and Levy.*



*Rabbi Fine, cont'd. from p. 1*

We have an extraordinary opportunity to go to Germany and be a part of this special presentation. We will stay for two nights in Oberammergau, where we will join the Abraham Geiger College delegation and groups of German Jewish graduate students. We will see the production of the Passion Play, and get to know the producer and actors over good German beer. It is not every day that we can meet good people and talk about how to move forward from the terrible tragedies of the past, sitting in the heart of what was Nazi Germany, and dealing with the story that first drove Christians and Jews apart. I hope you will consider joining me and Alla for this truly once-in-lifetime opportunity.

In the near future, I will be sending information out (as soon as I have it) with the particulars and cost of this trip. We will fly to Berlin on Thursday night, May 7<sup>th</sup> and arrive in Berlin on Friday, where we will spend three days of touring (led by me) and celebrating Shabbat with the Berlin Jewish community (including lunch with the egalitarian Masorti/Conservative congregation). Highlights will include a walking tour of the old Jewish quarter of Berlin, a visit to the Brandenburg Gate and the federal Holocaust memorial, a tour of the Jewish Museum, as well as breakfast in the German parliament building and a tour of the highlights of the Pergamon and Egyptian museums (the Pergamon altar, the Ishtar Gate of ancient Babylon, the bust of Nefertiti and the Amarna discoveries of the monotheistic worship of the sun in Egypt before the beginnings of Israel).

Most of the sites we will see in Berlin are different from what we did when we went to Germany together some years ago. After three nights in historic Berlin, we will travel to Munich by high-speed train. A visit to Dachau will precede Oberammergau, and a visit to the beautiful "Sleeping Beauty castle" of Neuschwanstein (Disney's inspiration) will follow on our return to Munich. The tour will conclude with a weekend of "free time" in Munich and a return to New Jersey on Sunday May 17<sup>th</sup>.

In February, after the conclusion of the survey course on periods of Jewish history that Rabbi Moser and I are teaching on Sunday mornings, I will present a series of talks on the history of Christian-Jewish relations in Germany in preparation for the May trip. Of course, all are welcome to attend the class whether or not you will be coming to Germany with us.

Look for the trip information in the mail and by email and please let me know if you have any questions.

***Rabbi Fine***

*Rabbi Leah, cont'd. from p. 1*

For centuries, we were in the habit of regarding Truth and Meaning as more or less inseparable. It was inconceivable to imagine something could be true without being meaningful, just as it was to imagine something being meaningful without also being true. One way of drawing a line between modernity and the ancient world is to say that the beginnings of the modern age are marked by the point at which we began to recognize a distinction between truth and meaning. By giving truth a certain independence from the value systems which create meaning, the thinkers of the modern era were able to create the conditions for radical advancements in the field of truth. It sometimes seems, however, that in our ongoing search for truth, the search for meaning has tended to lag behind. The systems of values which give our lives meaning flourish in a healthy way so long as they are divorced from any obligation to the truth, but the reverse is equally true: Without some way of finding meaning in the world around us, our relentless search for truth only serves to deepen the hollowness of our lives, not to fill it. It seems that Truth and Meaning can't be so casually separated after all.

I think the exciting thing about this particular historical moment we live in is that as a people, we are engaged in the collective project of uncovering new meaning in the wealth of new historical truths being uncovered each day. Archaeological evidence challenging the Torah's narrative of exodus and conquest may challenge long-held ideas about who we are and where we come from, but it also allows us to ask entirely new questions. If the exodus probably didn't occur as described in the Torah, then why did our ancient ancestors choose to tell this story about themselves? If, as some scholars believe, the majority of the early Israelites weren't invaders from the outside but were in fact descendants of the Canaanites themselves, then what was it that caused this group of people to draw a distinction between themselves and the other inhabitants of the land? In exploring the answers to these questions, we may open up new paths in the search for meaning, paths that weren't available to us so long as we accepted the biblical narrative in a relatively uncritical way.

In navigating the tricky relationship between historical truth and sacred memory, I believe that the best model we have available to us comes from within the rabbinic tradition itself. The rabbis of the Talmud were well aware of the diversity of opinion existing within their ranks concerning everything from Jewish law to the meaning of scriptural passages. But rather than establish a particular point of view as "correct" and ignoring the others, the sages self-consciously preserved the wealth of minority opinions, even those which completely contradicted the accepted answer. This respect for contradictory perspectives can serve us well in a world where tradition, the historical record, and archaeological evidence may all have different stories to tell. By listening to all the stories and bringing them into conversation with each other, we can open the way to a depth of meaning unavailable to us so long as we cling to a single perspective at the expense of all others.

## KIDDUSH CLUB

Having a nice kiddush after Shabbat services allows Temple Israel and RCBI members to hang around and socialize, catching up with our friends, their families, and guests, and strengthening our bonds as a Jewish community.

For the past couple of years, our synagogue budget has been unable to sustain the cost of catered Shabbat kiddushim, which typically run between \$225 and \$250. Consequently, we must rely on sponsors—members, family, and friends—commemorating a special occasion such as an anniversary, bar or bat mitzvah, or birthday.

Since sponsored kiddushim are infrequent, our only option to prevent having just wine, challah, and herring tidbits (a “toothpick” kiddush) has been the Kiddush Club. Anyone can become a member of the Kiddush Club by making a once-a-year donation. I’m not sure how the number came about, but historically, the suggested contribution has been \$144 (eight times *chai*). Obviously, not every everyone can afford that, so we ask that you please give what you can, perhaps \$50 or \$75.

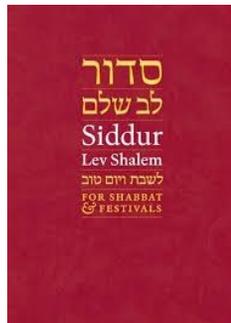
The Kiddush Club consists of financial donors, volunteers who shop for food on a Wednesday or Thursday, and volunteers who prepare the food on Friday morning. A typical kiddush for 25-35 people costs between \$120 and \$145. This is far less than the cost of a catered kiddush. Those who buy the food make sure we get the most we can for the least amount of money.

As of this writing, the Kiddush Club reserves are about half of where they need to be to sustain our efforts for the remainder of the fiscal year. Please become a Kiddush Club member and/or volunteer to buy kosher food, as Bob Smolen, Linda Paige, and I (on occasion) do. Or, volunteer to prepare kiddush food in the TI kitchen on Friday mornings as Bill Scher, Stacey Scott, Linda Paige, and I do. It’s a fun and satisfying way to do a mitzvah.

**Bob Dworkin, chair**

## Gift Ideas for Special Occasions: Contribute to our Siddur Lev Shalem Fund

We have purchased Siddur Lev Shalem (“the red books”) prayer books for our Shabbat services. We want to fill *all* our book holders with these wonderful new editions and you can help! Please consider honoring a loved one with a gift for any special occasion or milestone by dedicating a new Shabbat prayer book in their name. **You can do so with a \$50 contribution to our Siddur Lev Shalem Fund.**



## Temple Israel & JCC Circle of Honor

The Circle of Honor is our campaign for high-end donors; it offers members an opportunity to make a three-year commitment with a minimum annual contribution of \$1,800.

Circle of Honor donors are publicly recognized with a plaque in the main lobby. In exchange for your pledge, you’ll receive benefits such as free admission to designated TI-JCC events, reserved High Holiday parking, advertising space in the annual Ad Journal, and more, depending on your level of commitment.

Information about the Circle of Honor is on our website at <http://www.synagogue.org/support-us/circle-of-honor>.

### Benefactor’s Circle

Beth & Freddie Kotek

### Patron’s Circle

Alyson Yashar and James Goldfarb  
Sharon & Kenneth Levitsky  
Rita & Robert Obeiter  
Tricia & Howard Schreiber

### Pillar’s Circle

Audrey Meyers & Scott Agins  
Shari & Manny Haber  
Peri & David Namerow  
In Memory of Ephraim & Geri Nelinson

### Sponsor’s Circle

Anonymous (2)  
Brandeis Men’s Club  
Laura & Philip Brody  
Roberta & Charles Fleischman  
Tamara & Barry Freeman  
Susie & Shelly Goldstein  
Suzanne & Joshua Holden  
Erin & Matthew Lindenberg  
Sylvia Flescher & Tom Marcyes  
Debbie, Wayne & Jared Miller  
Lisa Mellman & Toby Nygaard  
Reconstructionist Congregation Beth Israel  
Johanna & Michael Rosen  
Sue Rubinoff  
Meri Schachter  
Merille & Harvey Siegel  
Sisterhood of Temple Israel  
Bonita & David Weiss  
Jen Blanck and Evan Weitz



(Left): Howard Schreiber speaking at the Solidarity Shabbat program.

(Right): Mayor Hache with Rabbi Fine & Rabbi Levy.



Laurence Fine rubbed elbows with Rep. Gottheimer and Mayor Hache at the event.

(Photos: Jo Rosen Photography)



**STAY IN TOUCH, STAY INFORMED**

Our **weekly Tidbits emails** keep our members up to date on what's happening that week and what's coming up.

Remember to check our **online calendar** for monthly services and events, on our website at **www.synagogue.org**

If you are on **Facebook**, you can follow us there. Both congregations have pages, where we post information, announcements and updates, and articles of interest.

**Look for Temple Israel and Jewish Community Center, and Reconstructionist Congregation Beth Israel.**

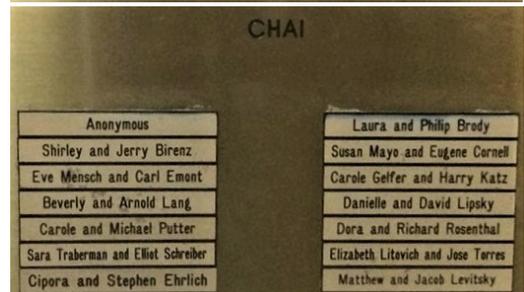
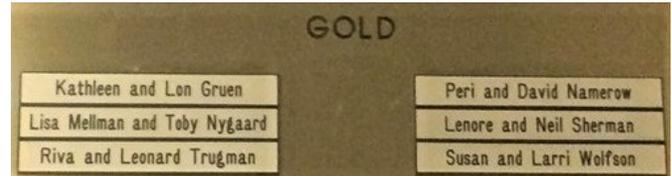
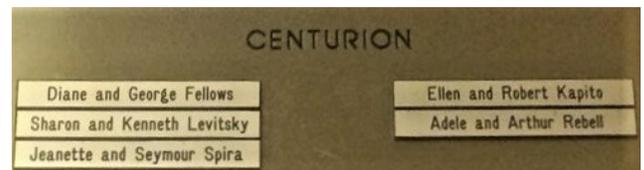


## ADDITIONAL DONOR ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

If you listen carefully, you just might hear a big sigh of relief from me! With a few exceptions (stained-glass window donation plaques and the Temple Israel Torah Campaign Plaque in the main sanctuary), here are pictures of all the remaining donor plaques I found in our synagogue.

These pictures include the 21<sup>st</sup> Century campaigns, the Chai campaign and the most recent plaques to acknowledge two of our teenage members' contributions (a cart for siddurim, and our basement storage room restoration). Thank you, thank you, thank you to all of our Temple Israel & JCC members, past and present, who generously and selflessly gave of themselves for prior, current and future members, our sacred community, so that we can enjoy our synagogue for prayer as well as social, educational and outreach events.

**Bob Dworkin**



# OPPORTUNITIES FOR GIVING

## Donations & Dedications

While Judaism itself can thrive without reference to finances, a community of Jews who are committed to the purpose of the synagogue—learning, worship, and fellowship—does need financial resources to help each other and themselves.

Most of us recognize our obligation to maintain membership in Temple Israel and to support it by payment of annual dues. However, dues alone do not cover all of our costs. There is a continuing need for donations to help assure the synagogue's strength and development.

We encourage any and all donations to Temple Israel. The following are suggested giving opportunities in which the funds are used to support all aspects of synagogue life:

Temple Israel Operating Fund any amount

### DEDICATION OPPORTUNITIES

Minyan of Comfort	\$36
Mahzor Lev Shalem For Rosh Hashanah & Yom Kippur	\$50
Siddur Lev Shalem	\$50
<i>Chumash Etz Hayim</i>	\$118
Memorial Plaque	\$540 (contact the office)
Large Memorial Tablet	\$54,000

The following are suggested giving opportunities in which the funds are used to support specific areas of synagogue life:

**Temple Israel Chai Campaign Fund** any amount

Funds the major capital improvements from our synagogue building renovation

**Religious School Enrichment Fund** any amount

Funds religious school enrichment programs & materials

**Temple Israel Torah Campaign:** Funds ritual needs such as Torah scroll repairs, prayer books, etc. **\$1800 Parsha Endowment Funds \$25,000 to establish a fund; \$18 donation to established funds**

Each Fund has a specific purpose. Consult column on the right

**Susan Reeve/Temple Israel Feed the Hungry Fund** any amount

Funds Temple Israel's Tikkun Olam Feed the Hungry Program

**Kiddush Club** Funds the kiddush when there is no regular kiddush sponsor \$144

**Rabbi's Discretionary Fund** any amount

Funds charitable purposes, at the discretion of the Rabbi

**Assistant Rabbi's Discretionary Fund** any amount

Funds charitable purposes, at the discretion of the Cantor

## Endowment Funds

### TEMPLE ISRAEL GENERAL ENDOWMENT FUND

**PURPOSE:** To fund maintenance and/or capital improvement projects to Temple Israel properties.

### AMSTERDAM FAMILY ENDOWMENT FUND

**PURPOSE:** To provide siddurim to Temple Israel religious school students.

### DONALD & HELEN FELLOWS MEMORIAL HOLOCAUST EDUCATION ENDOWMENT FUND

**PURPOSE:** To fund the education program portion of the Annual Holocaust Remembrance.

### PHYLLIS ANN ZWEIG FRIEDMAN ENDOWMENT FUND

**PURPOSE:** To provide scholarship to a Temple Israel high school student to attend an Israel/Eastern Europe educational program.

### DAVID & SARA GOODMAN ENDOWMENT FUND

**PURPOSE:** To fund supplemental Jewish experiences for Jewish youth.

### DAVID & SALLY KIRSCH SCHOLARSHIP ENDOWMENT FUND

**PURPOSE:** To provide scholarship to a religious school graduating student for continuing Jewish religious education.

### ALEXANDER & SOPHIE PURITZ MEMORIAL ENDOWMENT FUND

**PURPOSE:** To fund the Temple Israel Annual Hanukkah Party, which shall include the distribution of silver dollars to all students.

### MAX AARON STRACHMAN MEMORIAL LIBRARY ENDOWMENT FUND

**PURPOSE:** To purchase educational materials for the library as well as fund library related educational events.

### WILLIAM & RHODA TOONKEL

### JEWISH MUSIC ENDOWMENT FUND

**PURPOSE:** To promote Jewish musical education for the Temple Israel religious school, as well as other musical and cultural experiences for Temple Israel and Jewish Community Center.

### Contribution Form

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed is my contribution of \$\_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_

**Checks for General Donations or Dedications should be made payable to Temple Israel.  
Checks for an Endowment or Discretionary Fund should be made payable to the specific Fund.**

This contribution is \_\_\_\_\_ in honor of or \_\_\_\_\_ in memory of

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



**TEMPLE  
ISRAEL**

and Jewish Community Center

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**In case you're wondering . . .**

Every issue of Temple Talk is a group project. That includes these two happy helpers, Aidan and Maeve Seltsam (a.k.a. Maureen & Bob's children) who help every time by affixing all the mailing labels so that your issue of Temple Talk shows up in your mailbox.

Thank you, Aidan and Maeve, for helping to complete each Temple Talk issue. Keep on sticking!

